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/For information on achieving the status of "chief" through the display and distribution of wealth (especially at potlatches) see category 556./

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hanging a number of bird and animal cloaks, representing ravens, eagles, whales, grizzly bears, black bears, and a few others. *Ălquntăm* asked each individual which of these cloaks he preferred to wear. One selected a raven, another an eagle, and so on. Each donned his choice from the wall and immediately became the bird or animal chosen. *Ălquntăm* gave each man or woman one or more names, and some food in compressed form; then sent him down in avian or mammal form. Even the animals could travel through the air like birds, and each landed on the peak of a mountain in the Bella Coola country, took off his cloak, and reassumed human form. The discarded coverings floated back up to *Nusmăt·a*. A few individuals, instead of coming to earth in animal form, swarmed down posts which stretched between the worlds.

This myth is fervently believed by the Bella Coola. Even Christian Indians, though they readily admit the biblical creation as applied to the white race, remain convinced of the manner in which their own ancestors came into being. At the present time, though most ancient beliefs are rapidly passing away, few, if any, Bella Coola doubt this account of the creation of their forefathers. Their conviction rests not only on the religious aspect of their life, but on the sociological. A man's most treasured possessions are the name brought down from above by his ancestor in the beginning of time, the knowledge of the form taken by that ancestor, and information about the place where he landed. A collection of myths of this kind is given in vol. I, chap. VI. Lacking knowledge of his first ancestor's form, a Bella Coola has slight chance of becoming a chief; such lore is the birthright of every descendant of one of these first people, and those without it are almost certain to be the offspring of slaves. The social aspects of creation myths will be described later; at this point a broad outline must suffice. *Nusmăt·a*, "The House of Myths," is the place in which these myths were made, and are now stored, two reasons for its importance in the eyes of the Bella Coola.

Nusmăt·a is not only connected with the history of an indi-

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instructed people about the significance of death omens; it was Raven who showed them the use of slings; and it was Raven who constructed secluded caves and ledges to serve as meeting-places for chiefs.

In brief, the Bella Coola regard Raven as an explorer, teacher, and inventor, whose power, obtained from *Ałquntăm*, enabled him to construct and outwit his maker, but not to create. Much of his work was for the good of mankind, but much was evil and malicious, an aspect which belongs to mythology. Essentially human, Raven could have been included among anthropomorphic, as well as among zoomorphic beings. He differs from most of the supernatural ones in belonging entirely to the past, as his descendants have none of the first Raven's power. It is doubtful whether he still exists, but in any case he has long since ceased to take any interest in the affairs of the Bella Coola, who consider him only as a figure of mythology and ancient history.

SUPERNATURAL BEINGS OF THE VEGETABLE AND MINERAL KINGDOMS

Bella Coola beliefs concerning anthropomorphic and zoomorphic beings are relatively clear and exact; their appearance is known, their powers and functions recognized. The supernatural attributes of trees and plants are less definite. *Ałquntăm* created the former in the beginning of time, and they were consequently able to talk and act like human beings at that distant period. Owing to the degeneration of man, mortals are no longer able to converse with trees, although the latter can still understand our remarks. In a vague way, the Bella Coola continue to think of trees as having human personalities, but so little is known of their powers, and they enter so seldom into contact or conflict with mortals, that they are practically ignored.

In an equally vague manner, Nature is regarded as a Mother, giving birth to the trees and plants. One of the *kusiut* dances portrays this birth of the flowers every spring (II, p. 196).

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539 who, in turn, would pass on the request so that it might reach each
831 member of the party. Not only is it contrary to custom for a commoner
785 to hold intercourse with a chief's wife, but it is unknown for a man to
ask another to sleep with his wife, so the youth was surprised and rather
[837] frightened. However, he acceded to the request, passed on the instruc-
tions, and washed. As he was bathing, a seal appeared in the surf beside
[622] him, and he was able to kill it easily. Each in turn behaved in the same
manner, washed, and then killed a seal. Next morning, when the chief
returned he was delighted that all had turned out in accordance with his
hopes. At the same time the wind dropped so that the party was able
to return home.

831 The power which had brought the seals within reach of the
785 men had been engendered in their own bodies by these ritual
acts after a rather lengthy period of continence. The Bella
Coola believe that such a procedure always increases their
strength and ability, therefore giving them a better chance to
gain favour from supernatural beings, and to take advantage
of opportunities offered. Hunters in particular are careful with
[224] regard to their marital life since animals know their acts and
825 thoughts, and hide from one who has not made himself "clean"
[783] by continence, its termination, and bathing. *Sxetsta* consists
of these three elements, but since continence is the most pro-
minent feature, the term may be translated as "ceremonial
chastity."

In its simplest form this comprises merely the three ele-
ments already mentioned. The longer the continence, the
greater the power engendered by its termination. A man who
has practised abstinence for a year has such strength within
himself that almost any good fortune may occur, and cases
are known in which it has been carried out for even longer
periods. More often, an individual practises ceremonial chas-
[184] tity in accordance with a family tradition. One old man gave
the following recipe and was most emphatic that it always
224 brought success in hunting and fishing; he added that on the
785 two occasions he had tried it, he had brought back a pheno-
menal number of skins.

A person planning to set out on an expedition for any pur-

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614 extinct, are unusual; normally, the group is largely centred in
621. one village, but with members scattered in other localities. There is no central organization. It is generally recognized that such a unit belongs in the village where its first ancestors settled, and the leading chief of that village is, therefore, an important person in the family, though without status of [622] "head" of it. His advice may be appealed to in cases of disputes [553] concerning names, but he lacks judicial authority. Theoretically, the descendants of the elder of two first people are considered as "elder brothers and elder sisters" of those descended from a younger brother or sister; but this is nothing more than an accepted fact; it plays no part in the social life of the community.

552 In addition to human names, the origin myths include those
614 applied to dogs. The first ancestral group had dogs, and these
773 animals had names, or were given them by their powerful masters. Ever since that time their descendants can apply these designations to their own dogs. It is unnecessary to validate such names, but no two canines can be given the same one at the same time, according to the rule which governs the bestowal of human names. This matter was not investigated in detail, and the only dog's name collected was one for which [539] the origin myth is as follows:

> When *Tăl·ĭo* was first settled in the beginning of time, the houses were built in parallel rows, one above the other, up the side of a steep knoll. At the very top was a toilet-house, built over such a steep incline [514] that excrement rolled down the hillside. In consequence, one of the early chiefs living there gave to his dog the name, *Nuliqwmutl di mnk'*, "Rolling excrement," which has since been preserved in the ancestral family of his descendants.

LAND

124 Great difficulty was experienced in obtaining information
423 about land tenure. The Bella Coola resent keenly the way in
177 which their land has been occupied by white settlers without, according to their standpoint, proper compensation. Ques-

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BC 614 428 721 and hunting-grounds to those who had helped them in their old age. But in every case the gift turned out to be of doubtful value, since young men grew up who claimed membership in the supposedly defunct ancestral family and combatted the right of those to whom it had been given. This always led to war.

BB BC 423 648 The following is an instance of a feud which arose from the bestowal of a hunting-area.

It is said that about 1850 the people of *Tcawat* (probably Bute Inlet) captured a Bella Bella woman as a slave. She escaped and fled up the *Tcawat* River, hoping to come in contact with the Bella Coola, who often hunted in that area. The woman was found by the mother's father of an informant who carefully looked after her while he was hunting beaver and brought her back to Bella Coola, thence sending her to Bella Bella. In gratitude her father, a Bella Bella chief, gave her rescuer the hunting-area known as *Nulam*, near Kwatna Inlet, with the consent of the members of his ancestral family. BB [425] The land so alienated should have remained permanently in possession of the Bella Coola ancestral family, but was too far removed from Bella Coola to be used regularly by the new owners. After the death of the Bella Bella chief, a number of individuals who claimed membership in his ancestral family asserted their rights to it. Many years later, after white traders had made their appearance on the coast, a Bella Coola went to *Nulam* and killed a large number of beaver. As he was leaving with their pelts he was murdered by some Bella Bella, ostensibly as a trespasser. But for the restraining influence of the white man this incident would undoubtedly have led to war. The informant still feels that he is entitled to hunt at *Nulam*, and did so several times when he was a young man; but his sons have never exercised the right, and it has practically lapsed.

BB BC 423 622 It is unfortunate that the above incident is drawn from Bella Bella, where the power of chiefs is much greater than among the Bella Coola. Consequently it is impossible to say

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exactly what right the Bella Bella chief had to dispose of the land. The informant assumed that he must have been powerful enough to dictate to his followers, an unknown possibility in Bella Coola. However, the informant regards the case as typical of what would likely happen should a Bella Coola try to give away land. Out of generosity or gratitude old men have sometimes done so, but always they have forgotten someone, perhaps a mere infant, who on growing up lays claim to the *sol'olam*.

BC
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Hunting-grounds are not the only valuable parts of the country. Even more important are stretches of river suitable for salmon-weirs. Of the same type are good places for olachen-nets, and rocks from which these fish can be caught with scoop-nets. Like hunting-grounds, these are said to have been pre-empted by the first people[1] and have passed into the ownership of the ancestral families descended from them. It is needless to repeat the gradual lapsing of rights to property of this kind in distant areas, since the principle is the same as that already described for land.

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In one respect, salmon-weirs differ from hunting-areas, since the latter can be used by any number of individuals, whereas the number of salmon-traps possible at any one weir is limited. Again the mythological origin must be given to explain the customary usage. If, for example, a salmon-weir supposedly built by one of the first groups of people was fully manned in the third generation by ten individuals, it is as-

[1] Several Bella Coola myths describe how the first-comers brought with them from above stone hammers for the construction of fish-dams, and how others were provided with miniature dams which grew larger when placed in position. Mr. H. I. Smith kindly gave the writer the following account, received from an elderly Bella Coola:

Long, long ago a certain *Tomukus* lived with his father, the Sun, who decided to send his child to earth. He came down to *Stuix*, carrying a stone beneath his arm-pit, and accompanied by a Wolf. *Tomukus* made the stone into a pile-driver with a face sculptured upon it, and with this tool drove piles to make a fish-weir. After a while a number of human beings came paddling up the Bella Coola River. In course of time the Wolf returned above, but *Tomukus* remained on earth catching salmon, and teaching the people the method which was in use until the last few years.

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lies in public opinion which expresses contempt for a lazy man who is constantly begging.

To anyone familiar with the definite social groupings of a tribe divided into clans or land-owning families, the ancestral family of the Bella Coola must appear as a vague and unreal unit, only distinguished by its intangibility. So it was found when investigating in the field. When information began to accumulate, it seemed as if there must be some definite obligations incumbent upon all members of the ancestral family, but none could be found. Without asking a direct question, the point was raised whether, if a man were killed, the members of his ancestral family would unite to avenge him. Conversely, were they liable for the deeds of any member? In each case the reply was in the negative; these matters concern only the immediate family. In regulating marriage the ancestral family is important, since it is wise for a man or woman to seek his mate within the members of that group, though it is not compulsory. Theoretically, the terms of kinship applied to members of the immediate family may be extended to members of the ancestral family, but in practice this is rarely the case, and, if so, is functionless. It might be argued that this somewhat wide application of kinship terms, verging on the classificatory usage, is a relic of an earlier, and now broken-down, clan system. It is impossible to prove or to deny such a contention. When trying to discover whether the members of an ancestral family ever contributed to a potlatch whereby one of their fellows established himself as a chief, the following interesting comment was received. The previous winter the informant had been in Bella Bella, and there the point was raised by a Bella Bella chief whom he quoted as follows:

"We laugh at you Bella Coola because each of you is always trying to be chief. Our system is much better; we all help our chiefs."

The man agreed with the Bella Bella man that there was an important difference between the practices of the two tribes.

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establish himself with the traditions of his new home. This is another illustration of the patrilineal tendency of the whole organization.

Politically, the village is the most important Bella Coola unit. Usually, though not always related to one another, the inhabitants are always friends. If an attack is made on a village by a hostile war-party, all the inhabitants suffer equally. On the other hand, if the residents decide to attack another settlement, there is no compulsion for anyone to share the burden. Each individual, with the exception of slaves, follows his own inclination. In the case of murder or other wrong inflicted by an individual, the responsibility rests on his immediate family, not the village. Factions within the village seem to have been unimportant; individual jealousies were common, and often led to murder, but if a family became unpopular or considered itself aggrieved, it usually moved to another village. Neighbouring settlements were generally on friendly terms and often assisted each other in war, but this was not compulsory. Indeed, cases are known in which a war-party from the outer coast, about to attack *Sunxl*, passed within a quarter of a mile of *Ẓomẓo-ts* without its inhabitants even warning their threatened neighbours.

As far as internal organization is concerned, the village is as fluid a unit as are most Bella Coola groupings. If one individual has attained a position of eminence through the potlatch system (vol. I, chap. IV), he is "chief" of the village, and his advice is generally followed. If several men have approximately the same importance, there is no dominating figure. In any case, a chief lacks executive authority, and such obedience as he receives is due to his personal influence. Some slight deference is paid to the man who uses the name of the eldest of the first group of settlers, the first chief, but this is not sufficient to warrant the title of "chief" with the significance usually attached to the term. The important members of the village are accustomed to meet for the discussion of ceremonial mat-

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621 623 [535] [796] ters, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact this ceremonial unity is its most important function.

With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore, each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the 361 river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built [184] type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them [342] stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many [171] cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there [487] is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox [164] epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty, others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space. [433] Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages, each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

342 [354] The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire, often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor, and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the side-walls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the different families, or for different members of one. In many cases the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire being used for heating and for more important meals. The [572] number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an [622] important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and any-[261] one present when food is being distributed is given a share as [353] a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall. [535] A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important in dances.

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The married sons of a chief usually live in his house, and if he is very powerful the husbands of his daughters may also reside with him. Such a man is at the zenith of power, surrounded by a close group, formed of elderly relatives, of children and grandchildren. Connections by marriage are also added to the family group. At the present time, for example, one Bella Coola man is looking after his brother's widow, and it is felt that she is a member of his family.

Another way in which a rich man can increase the size of his family is by adoption. Parents who have lost an infant may adopt the child of some member of the ancestral family of either father or mother. The matter is usually arranged soon after birth, and the transfer takes place immediately after weaning. The real parents are willing since they know that the adopting parents will be able to validate valuable prerogatives and names for the child, which they themselves are unable to do. This desire for their child's welfare overrules parental love. In such cases the real father or mother can likewise bestow names and other prerogatives on the child, who really becomes a member of two families. This is often done by an old couple whose own children have married and moved away, and who thus find themselves lonely. It is considered disgraceful for parents to allow their children to be adopted by anyone not a member of their ancestral family, since that would be an admission of inability to bring up a child in the path of his ancestors.

"Your father was not strong," could be said to such a child as a reproach.

In the case of an orphan some wealthy relative is almost always ready to adopt him. Consequently, as he grows up, he receives his full share of the ancestral origin myth, and the names embodied therein, so that the loss of his own parents is of little consequence in the course of life. Occasionally a child is not adopted by relatives, and then his fate is indeed hard.

shelter in the house of any chief, and shared in the food which was being distributed at the almost continuous ceremonial feasts. Now, each family lives alone and no one feels any responsibility for this old man.

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593 family are liable. It is very rare for a woman to be killed in
627 a blood feud. A death is answered by a death; if two persons
682 should be slain for one murder the family which has suffered
[562] the double loss endeavours to kill another of their enemies. In
[683] case of wounding, an effort is made to wound the offender, but if he should be killed his family would try to avenge him. More often, one of the offender's family takes the initiative of offering goods to the injured family, "to cure the wound." If the offer is accepted, and the goods delivered properly, the matter is at an end. If a murder be committed within the ranks of the immediate family, for instance, if a brother kill a brother, revenge, if executed, must be meted out to the actual
● [622] offender. If requested to do so, the leading chief of a village may offer his advice, but it is always considered that revenge concerns only the immediate family.

612 Revenge is a topic which shows clearly the essential fluidity
614 of the family. There are no well-defined degrees of relation-
[627] ship within which responsibility rests. Instead, everyone
[682] knows, in the open life of the community, how many persons share the family life of the individual, and they alone are held to account, or they alone demand compensation. From its very nature, the family must be a bilateral unit which, when powerful, stretches out to absorb members of the ancestral families of both mother and father.

Not only does the family thus appear constantly to be attracting to itself members of the ancestral family of either parent, but these relatives themselves are deeply interested in the affairs of the family. This is most clearly shown in the case of children who, of course, are members of the ancestral family of both their mother and father. A few days after
553 birth some relative is expected to call together the people of
612 the village where the child is born for the bestowal and valida-
614 tion of an ancestral name. It is considered an evidence of
[551] poverty if this is done by the father, as if his child were only supported by his parents, not by a larger circle of relatives. It is immaterial whether this gathering be called by a relative

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601 Coola social organization, and of the absence of standardized obligations based upon specific relationships.

Slaves

567 Since a slave was[a] without status in the Bella Coola community, it is perhaps incorrect to include a description of [559] slavery in a chapter on social organization; but as slaves lived in the Bella Coola villages, it seems reasonable to include them when dealing with the different units of the tribe. It was 162 impossible to obtain an accurate estimate of their number in 567 Bella Coola; slavery has been so long abandoned that the present natives could only hazard vague guesses. Judging from conversational remarks by elderly men, it seems probable that in the old days there was a considerable slave population in every Bella Coola village, comprising at times as much as thirty to forty per cent of the total population.

527 When a party raided a village most of the inhabitants were 727 slain, but some, especially children, young adults, or famous chiefs were captured. As far as could be learned, once a captive had reached Bella Coola he was in little danger, since torture or systematic slaying after the heat of battle had subsided was not a Bella Coola characteristic. The leader of the expedition retained many of the captives as his own slaves, and distributed others among his followers. Anyone, chief [422] or commoner, could own slaves in the same way that he could own any other type of goods.

527 Like any other commodity, slaves were bought and sold. 497 The Bella Coola were usually so well provided with salmon that they were able to exchange these fish with the members [422] of other tribes for slaves. Lack of strong chieftainship among [722] the Bella Coola hindered their success in war, so that most of [491] their slaves were obtained by trade. To the same category [773] belong those obtained as presents at potlatches. If, however, [441] a member of one of the tribes on the lower Fraser River was

[a] One of the first efforts of the white man's establishment in British Columbia was the freeing of all slaves. Consequently the past tense is used in this section.

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CHAPTER IV

RANK

Chieftainship—Secret Society—The Potlatch

CHIEFTAINSHIP

IN the previous chapter have been described the beliefs of the Bella Coola concerning the origin of names, and the attitude of pride with which they regard those embodied in ancestral myths, which carry with them prized prerogatives. But the unsystematic method by which ancestral names are inherited is sufficient to show that their possession, though valued for sentimental reasons, is not enough to make the owner a chief. On what, then, is Bella Coola chieftainship based? Expressed briefly, it depends on the number and value of presents distributed at any kind of ceremonial. To the Bella Coola, every rite, whether it be a marriage, the bestowal of a name, a dance, a type of funeral, or admission into a secret society, is a prerogative intimately associated with the myth by which the performance is authorized. Accordingly, the host is really displaying the glories of his ancestors before the eyes of guests present at the ceremony. To the Bella Coola it is unthinkable for such to be performed without the giving of presents to all; failure to do so would destroy the value of the prerogative. The potlatch is the ceremonial at which the most lavish generosity is displayed, but the principle of the acquisition of prestige by the giving of presents is the same for all other rites; the only difference is that at a potlatch a man is able to display his generosity to a larger number of recipients. In consequence, the aim of every ambitious man is to hold potlatches, since his status in the community virtually rests on his ability in this respect. The ritual of a potlatch will be given in detail in the latter part of this chapter, but its complications will be intelligible only after a description of the

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622 broader principles of chieftainship. The first essential is to 556 consider the principles of present-giving. 431

PRESENTS

556 Consider, for example, a man who wishes to take for him- 431 self one of his ancestral names, and at the same time to display 424 certain features of his ancestral myth—a particular type of house, totem-pole, or dance used by one of his forefathers. He invites guests to his house, displays the feature of his myth, and must give a present to each to show the value of his prerogative and to demonstrate that he has not merely casually usurped the function in question. In giving a present of, for instance, $20, it is as if he said to the recipient:

"See! These are the glories of my ancestors of whom *I* am the descendant. *I* have a part in their fame. To make this valid I give you from my wealth a mere trifle, a matter of no consequence to me, who am so firmly established in the path of my ancestors."

556 The guest receives the money with mixed feelings. On the 431 one hand he has received $20 as a "present." But if he wishes to elevate his own position and his own prestige, together with that of his ancestors, it is incumbent on him to repay this sum with interest. Contrary to the practice among some other [171] coastal tribes, there is no fixed rate of interest among the Bella Coola. An ambitious man who seeks to become a chief will strive to the utmost to pay back with heavy interest when he himself gives a ceremony so that his fame will be carried far and near. If he should repay only the principal, he would be [558] regarded as having done all that was obligatory, but should he fail to do even so much, he would soon sink to a position of little consequence, no matter how lofty and distinguished his ancestral name might be.

171 In this respect there is a parallel between the Bella 556 Coola and ourselves. A man invited to a dinner party is not 558 compelled to return the compliment, but if, in the course of

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the writer was in Bella Coola, a non-ceremonial entertainment was given one evening at which several men sang and performed. The writer was asked to sing a Bella Coola song, which he did in the belief that it was not one that was incorporated in the ancestral myth of anyone. Unfortunately, his teacher had erred, and as soon as the song was completed an old woman arose and stated that it belonged to her ancestral family. She avoided the difficulty of its singing by immediately announcing that the singer was her "son." Thus the writer was adopted into a Bella Coola family, a circumstance which aided him considerably in collecting information. This did not alter the fact that a ceremonial song had been sung. Accordingly, the woman gave presents to the guests, thereby legalizing the adoption, and saving herself from the disgrace of having one of her songs used as if it were a matter of no consequence, free to anyone. 123 533 556* 424 [597]

SEATING

Presents are also a means of obtaining seats. Every Bella Coola has at least one name embodied in an ancient myth. A man who wishes to become a chief can do so only by giving lavish presents to make his designation "strong," "firm," or "bright," to use Bella Coola expressions. Such gifts increase the importance of the owner's name, and they obtain for him the right to a seat, more or less definitely located, in the house. Since all Bella Coola habitations are built on similar lines, a man can occupy his wonted position when summoned to a ceremony in any house. The validating of ancestral names and the acquisition of seats are among the important features which occur at potlatches. 554 556* [622] [424] [553]

In the beginning of time, when the first people were sent down to populate the earth, it is assumed that each who established a village, consisting of a single house, seated himself in the best spot within the dwelling, namely the central position behind the fire; his younger relatives ranged either beside him [773]

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all that he sits in an enviable spot, irrespective of its location in the house. 554 556*

In precisely the same manner a man may take for himself a seat in the central part of the row behind the fire, but he is laughed at for endeavouring to assume a dignity, unworthily, unless he can validate his position by lavish presents. The Bella Coola are always ready to make fun of a person who fails to maintain his seat. On the death of the occupant of the central position it is taken for granted that whoever inherits his name will assume that location and give the essential presents, but it is not incumbent upon him to do so. He may choose to establish his new name at his old station, beside, instead of behind, the fire. Thus it has come to pass that the seat of the most important chief of a village is often at the side of the house. When all are seated the chiefs may be widely separated, and a parent may have obtained for his son a seat in a better part of the house than his own. But as a rule the chiefs sit in a row at the back of the fire, the most influential one in the middle. There must have been feuds when two men desired to seat themselves in the central position at the same time, but disputes about this were uncommon, because a man's seat was, and still is, primarily regarded as the intangible goods wherewith he is clothed, rather than his right to sit at any particular spot. It is these non-material coverings that enable a man to be bold and assertive in argument or suggestion, in fact to be a chief. A young man may have had conferred on him one of the noblest names, but his influence depends on the value of the goods expended on his behalf, subject of course to the universal characteristic that a man of forceful character may have more influence than his actual position warrants. [424] [428] [622] [424]

Jealous feuds are common when the man who owns the name of the first chief, first ancestor of a village, has duly validated it, but is being eclipsed in the giving of potlatches by a man whose name is of less intrinsic importance. Such a complication recently arose at Kimsquit, and the Bella Coola [578] [682]

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554 ascribe two murders which took place there in 1915 to jealousy engendered by rivalry.

* 556 A chief who desires to have his son, or other near relative, [578] succeed to his actual seat may validate for him a position at [682] his feet. If several potlatches be given, with distribution of goods for this purpose, it becomes recognized that the son shall [622] take his father's seat. None the less, he will not have his father's influence or prestige unless he can himself continue to give away goods, because the power of a chief rests on this, not on his ancient name or the location of his seat.

553 Further evidence that a man's influence rests less on his * 556 actual name than on the wealth distributed with reference to it is found in the lack of uniformity in the type of names validated. Those of highest potential importance are the ones brought to the earth by the first-comers, yet in many cases a man prefers to elevate his position with respect to a name of later origin. It is not uncommon for a man to validate several ancestral designations, and choose one of them to be his most important by valuable gifts for the seat which he occupies with respect to it; or in other cases a name of modern origin is selected and elevated. Thus, a certain Bella Coola chief who is the legal owner of the names *Q̇eil* and *Xemlaix*, two of the first people to settle this earth, has based his greatness on the goods expended for a seat with reference to the name *Siäɬxeläx*, of more modern origin. It is accordingly clear that any Bella Coola can rise to a position of importance, even though he lacks the right to one of the most ancient names. Moreover, some chiefs prefer to validate several names rather than concentrate on one alone.

[622] Furthermore, a powerful chief can create a name. In this case the "power" of the designation rests, not in any supernatural origin, but in the actual wealth distributed. Two examples will serve to illustrate this point. Between 1880 and 1890 a chief was preparing to give a potlatch at which his nephew was to receive a name, when fire destroyed the village with the exception of his house. This added to the value of

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chief had thus obtained a seat for his daughter, as well as ones for his two sons. But usually a woman continues to use the ancestral name given to her in infancy until she is able to assist her husband in a potlatch, when a name is validated for her (see I, p. 410). The ancestral names of the first women to occupy this earth are reserved for women and, like men's names, vary in prestige according to the prowess of their owners. Most names given to children, though embodied in origin myths, are applicable to either sex; and these are the common designations of women. Cases are known in which a woman has assumed an ancestral name if her brother has allowed it to fall into ill-repute through failure to give potlatches.

With such a fluid system, no fixed line can be drawn between chief and commoner. But after his fourth potlatch a man's influence in the community has become so great that he will usually feel justified in having the carpenters make for him a material seat. There is nothing to prevent a person having one made for him before he has given the requisite number of potlatches, but too rapid assumption may render him liable to the scorn of the community through his failure to show himself sufficiently "strong." The contempt shown to anyone attempting to usurp too lofty a place is a strong deterrent to a proud young man.

On the material seat are carved the man's ancestral crests, in other words the forms in which his first ancestors came to earth, or some of the beings with whom they came in contact. To show these is a matter of pride, but unless the display is fittingly validated, the man's own dignity will be lowered, as well as that of his ancestors. Construction of a seat is particularly common when a man is establishing himself in the central position behind the fire, and claims this to be where his first ancestor sat. Others among the first people may have chosen seats in other parts of the house, and in these, likewise, a man who is taking his ancestral name may have a material seat constructed. Establishment in such a position increases a chief's feeling of mental superiority, as if strength-

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ened by the age-long power of his ancestor. Finally, in old age a powerful chief is careless where he seats himself; his fame is so great that he can afford to disregard all conventions.

POWER OF CHIEFS

It will be seen from the foregoing that chieftainship among the Bella Coola does not depend on hereditary rank, still less on an elective principle, but on the individual's prestige as displayed, especially in his ability to acquire for himself a firm seat by the giving of presents. As he continues to do so his influence becomes ever greater. Consequently, it is impossible to state clearly what are the powers of a chief; such depend upon his prestige and influence. For a Bella Coola chief has no executive or judicial authority; what deference is shown to him depends on his success as a man, a factor which is constantly rising or falling.

The coming of the white man has enabled the Bella Coola to earn comparatively large sums of money by trapping and fishing. This in turn has enabled nearly everyone to give at least one potlatch, a very different state of affairs from that which prevailed in the last century when it required years of toil for a man to amass the necessary food and skins. Consequently, in many towns there were no men who had given potlatches, so that a man's prestige was estimated by the presents he had given at smaller ceremonies. Sometimes, moreover, a man preferred to increase his fame by giving rites of a different nature, such as *kusiut* dances, and the presents then distributed might elevate him in the eyes of the community, to a position above that of a man who had given a potlatch. This, however, was unusual.

After a fourth potlatch a man is accorded a position of eminence, and is termed a *numitl* chief. *Numitl* is an untranslatable word, with the significance of "passage," an allusion to the amount of goods which have passed through his hands. Jealous and vulgar-minded persons pun on the word, applying

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554 it to the digestive tract. After a man has given four potlatches
* 556 he feels superior to those who have been unable to do likewise.
● 622 His name is "bright," "clean," "heavy," "firm," or "upright"
[578] in Bella Coola terms, and so, likewise, his seat. He feels independent and proud. Such a chief will fearlessly enter the back-room where ceremonial rites are taking place, even if not entitled to do so.

"He is so strong, he can go where he will," say the Bella Coola.

The advice of such a man is taken because of his ability and prestige, especially by the members of his own family. A few years ago, for example, when a certain Bella Coola died, his brother wished a *kusiut* name-prerogative of the deceased to pass to the dead man's daughter. The girl's mother's father, a *numitl* chief, objected, and his desires were followed, although the name in question was not connected in any way with his family. In small matters, too, people gladly carry out the
[592] wishes of a chief. Work around the house is done for him without thought of disobedience. An old man was asked whether, when he was young, chiefs gave many orders and acted as masters in their households.

"You bet," the old man answered emphatically with a dry chuckle.

231 It is difficult now to form an accurate estimate, from obser-
552 vation, of the influence of chiefs solely through virtue of the
622 goods they have expended. But the following is a concrete example. In November, 1923, the writer, while walking through the Bella Coola village, was bitten by a dog. He was told that the animal belonged to a certain old woman. When next he saw the owner he asked her whether she knew that her dog attacked passers-by.

"Yes," she answered, in a matter-of-fact tone, "He is a chief and can do what he likes."

Further questioning elicited the information that the old
[766] woman and her husband, the childless last survivors of an ancestral family, had transmitted some of their ancestral

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names to their dog, and had distributed presents to validate the bestowal. Consequently, the animal is a chief (see Plate 11)[1] and can do as he likes. When it dies it will be mourned as a chief. Moreover, a number of people have returned the presents which they received at the time the dog was made a chief, and this money is kept by the woman and her husband, to be used when they perform the rite of mourning for the dog at death.

When this is possible, in the present degenerate days, it is not difficult to understand how, formerly, a great chief felt himself above the restraints that hindered lesser men. The last great Bella Coola chief was *Potles*, who died between 1870 and 1880. His influence and power were so great that he was a virtual ruler, daring anything. If he requested a young man to take his food box home and the youth was slow to obey, *Potles* had no hesitation in killing him on the spot. Such great power, though unusual, is intelligible to the Bella Coola, since *Potles* gave far more potlatches than any of his contemporaries. Other chiefs have been known to attempt a similar arbitrary use of power, but have failed, since their prestige was not great enough to justify it. The fame of a mighty chief spreads up and down the coast, and protects him and the members of his family from being ambushed and slain in any sporadic foray. During an actual fight, however, a chief had to take his chances with the rest, but the comparative immunity was a great advantage.

The Bella Coola recognize the fundamental differences between their own concepts about chieftainship and those of other coastal tribes with whom they come in contact. This point was mentioned in the course of conversation by several men. The most powerful chief known to them was *Tcubisa*, who, they say, was virtual monarch of the Kitkatla. None of his subjects could go hunting without his permission, and he had rights to a certain share of their booty. At any ceremony presents had first to be given to him, and if he were slighted in this respect, he would kill the offender. It is be-

[1] [See cat. 116, P 186 (c) - ANALYST]

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lieved that all the Kitkatla chiefs were powerful, but *Tcabisa* was the greatest of all. It is said that one of his prerogatives[1] was to exercise *jus primae noctis* whenever a Kitkatla was married. Without question, tales of this chief's prowess have become exaggerated in transmission, none the less they show that the Bella Coola realize the great importance of the northern chiefs. Concerning their nearer neighbours, the Bella Bella, the Bella Coola understand the way in which the members of a family combine to help their chief in the giving of presents. They say that the Bella Bella consider the Bella Coola practice of each one endeavouring to make himself a chief to be foolish in the extreme. Such is also said to be the opinion among the Kwakiutl, who support their contention that in Bella Coola all are chiefs, from the fact that flooring exists under the seats of all, whereas in Fort Rupert, their home, such occurs only beneath the seats of chiefs.

Corresponding to the extreme paucity of functions possessed by Bella Coola chiefs, their prerogatives are likewise scanty. Indeed, they take their validated seats only during certain rites of the secret society connected with chiefs, at potlatches, and at ceremonial meals. These last occur whenever a deer or seal is killed; the latter is considered a great delicacy.[2] Anyone can kill a seal, but it would be unthinkable for a Bella Coola to share its flesh with his immediate family only. The animal is cleaned, the hole made by bullet or spear carefully plugged, and the carcass boiled whole in a large box. Meanwhile a herald (I, p. 244) summons the chiefs to the house where the successful hunter lives. If the meal is to consist merely of one small seal, only a few chiefs are invited, those of greatest influence through their possession of "strong" seats. When several seals have been killed, the number invited is correspondingly larger, but no woman may partake unless she ranks

[1] This is said to have been a personal prerogative, not shared by all chiefs, and requiring validation by valuable presents.

[2] Only traces of the rite described in this paragraph occur at the present time. In fact, the reservation of seal meat for chiefs alone was discontinued towards the close of the last century.

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as a man by the duly validated ownership of a chief's name in her own right. Formerly a slave was never allowed to eat seal, unless he had been the slayer. If many seals are killed, chiefs from adjacent villages are sometimes invited. The chiefs seat themselves according to their proper positions and are first served with the blood-stained grease that floats to the top of the water as the meat is boiling. When cooked, the meat is cut into strips, measured in terms of so many finger breadths, according to the number of guests. The cuts run down each fore-flipper, so that each receives a narrow strip including one of the toes. The head is always given to the herald.[3]

Wealthy chiefs frequently invite their fellows to ordinary meals even when no seal or deer has been killed. On these occasions, as at seal feasts, the guests are designated by their ancestral names, not by those in general use.

Chiefs are also accustomed to meet for the discussion of matters connected with the winter ceremonial; on such occasions their number may be augmented by men of influence in the secret society, though they do not rank as chiefs. Such a meeting is always called when a new member is to be initiated into the *kusiut* society. If there is difference of opinion the influence of even a *numitl* chief is outweighed by a man of importance in the society. The matter is discussed by all present and a decision reached by general agreement. It is difficult for a white man to understand how such is possible without either a vote, or general recognition by all that the views of some individual must be accepted. The writer was present at one such meeting, and was struck by the manner in which, after considerable, and at times heated, discussion, a consensus of opinion was reached, and accepted even by those who had proposed a contrary course.

Near every village is a place where the chiefs hold such meetings. All the inhabitants know the general locality, but

[3]Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of this account, but errors may have crept in on account of the length of time which has elapsed since the ceremony was carried out in full detail.

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622 there is such dread of the supernatural powers possessed by
623 members of the *kusiut* society that none would dare go there.
778 If an uninitiated person should do so, he would formerly have
been either killed or initiated into the society. The meeting-
[575] place of the *Q̇omqo·ts* chiefs is on a ledge of rock jutting out
over a waterfall about a quarter of a mile from the village.
The stream winds down a narrow cleft of the mountain side,
screened by dense vegetation, and suddenly falls into a cauldron, so hemmed in by cliffs that no sunlight can enter. The
ledge is immediately above the brink of the falls, one of the
most awe-inspiring places imaginable. The meeting-places of
other villages lack such natural settings, though all are at the
bases of cliffs, or near some easily distinguished feature. Some
178 of them are decorated with rude carvings, pecked into the
532 stone. The meaning of the designs is not known to any of
778 the present inhabitants. Some of them were made, long ago,
by chiefs when they were composing tunes; they picked out
the rock in time to the music forming in their minds. Others
[211] were mere memorials of certain events. If a chief gave an
important ceremony, he, or one of his friends, carved a figure,
perhaps that of a man, perhaps of some animal connected with
the rite, to recall the occasion. No carvings have been made
within the life-time of any Bella Coola, so it is probable that
they had further significance, now unknown.

622 When a chief wishes to summon his fellows for a meeting
623 he visits each and notifies him by a simple pressure of the foot,
in many cases unobserved even by those sitting near. The
201 person so called slips away, unostentatiously, to the meeting-
place.

578 The position of chief was not without disadvantages in the
622 old days. The Bella Coola are so jealous that anyone who
682 succeeded in elevating himself to a position above his fellows
became an object of envy. Their mythology contains many
[152] examples of the murder of some powerful chief by rivals of his
own village, and informants of today state that these records
are true. One intelligent man asserted that his father had

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thus been slain about seventy years earlier. It appears that attempts were commonly made to kill chiefs by means of sympathetic magic, and it is quite possible that such attempts, becoming known, preyed upon the minds of the victims to such an extent that death resulted.

WEALTH

Since wealth is so important in chieftainship, it would be desirable at this point to consider the concepts of wealth. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a satisfactory treatment of this subject. The coming of the white man altered the economic aspects of Bella Coola life so radically, and at such an early period, that concrete examples of economic interdependence, so useful in a thorough study, could not be obtained in the field. It is possible that greater attention to this subject might have produced more satisfactory results, but I am doubtful of this.

In the old days, "wealth" was of two categories: (*a*) Prerogatives, tangible or intangible, which could be shown, pictorially or dramatically, or could be expounded in words; and (*b*) Goods which could be distributed for validating such prerogatives. Individual possessions, unsuited for distribution, were hardly considered as wealth; a sewing-machine, a bottle of whiskey, a bed, or some other luxury might give satisfaction to the owner, but did not increase his importance in the eyes of his fellows. The value of objects was only for their use in ceremonial distribution; indeed, prior to such distribution, they were only of potential value. This attitude controlled Bella Coola economics in the early days of contact, and still influences their behaviour. A native store-keeper once ruefully commented on the fact that he would gain no advantage from the goods on his shelves, since he hoped merely to sell them, not to give them away.

A man's relatives were expected to help him in the acquisition of goods, but the extent of their contributions was never

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present, and the fame of the initiate is thereby carried farther afield than would be possible if only Bella Coola were in attendance. Every individual duly secluded and given a *sisaok* name feels himself ceremonially allied to others who have had a similar experience, and they form a grouping which may be termed the *sisaok* secret society.

The close connection between this society and chiefs is obvious from the presence of names of each type in the same ancestral myths. None the less, every chief, that is a person with duly validated ancestral name and seat, is not a *sisaok*, unless he has validated a *sisaok* name for himself and undergone the period of seclusion. Conversely, a man may be a duly authorized member of the *sisaok* although lacking a seat and the other marks of chieftainship. The relationship is, however, so close that the Bella Coola think of the *sisaok* society as a society of chiefs. *Sisaok* dances take place at potlatches and funerals, and occasionally at gatherings of less importance. Difficulties arise at the death of a chief who has failed to use some of his goods for the acquisition of a *sisaok* name. Such a case took place at the death of an important Bella Coola in the summer of 1923. Theoretically, he was ignorant of *sisaok* rites, but after much discussion these were used on account of his importance as a *numitl* chief, an instance of the manner in which a man's personal importance over-rules ceremonial dictates.

The Bella Coola believe that only some of their *sisaok* name-prerogatives came to this earth at the beginning of time with their first ancestors, and that many more have been acquired later by supernatural experiences. These were especially common among their forbears as they ranged over this earth seeking places to settle in the beginning of time. No *sisaok* name can be assumed casually; each must have had a specific origin. There are few *sisaok* origin myths, though theoretically there should be one to account for every name. The explanation appears to lie in the undoubted fact that many *sisaok* prerogatives have been acquired comparatively recently

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(4) The strengthening of the donor's seat. 556*

(5) The strengthening, or initial establishment, of seats for a number of young relatives of the donor who may, or may not, be those who are being initiated into the *sisaok* society. Other youths may also be established on seats by their relatives. 796

The duration of a potlatch varies with the number of rites being performed. The preliminaries, including the beginning of seclusion for *sisaok* initiates, requires at least several weeks, in some cases months. There is further delay of a week or more after the arrival of the first guests, as only when the last party has arrived can the actual potlatch begin. This can then be completed in three days and nights, although if many initiates are performing their *sisaok* dances, a longer time is required.

What are the consequences of giving a potlatch?

In the first place the donor spreads the fame of his name far and wide, also the myth with which it is incorporated. Thus he increases the renown of his ancestors, a source of intense pride and gratification. 556*

More important even than this, it elevates the donor himself. With the proper carrying out of the complicated ritual and the knowledge that his name is now known among different tribes, a man experiences a feeling of mental superiority which enables him to take a leading part in the affairs of his community. In Bella Coola a chief (*stältumx̣*) is a person whose influence is paramount owing to his success in giving potlatches.[6] If several chiefs in one village have given potlatches, he who has given most is generally of greatest importance, although often a man of forceful character who has held, for example, five potlatches will be regarded with greater respect than one of lesser weight, even if he has given six. The whole system is exceedingly fluid, as might be expected where chieftainship depends on individual prowess. In theory, the man who holds the name of the first person to occupy a village, at [156] 556* 622 [554] [182]

[6] Particularly if he has given four potlatches and can accordingly be described as a *nemäl* chief (I, p. 173). In *sisaok* songs the archaic word *stämamuts* is also sometimes employed for "chief."

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the time the earth was settled, ought to be chief of that village. If he has been able to give the necessary potlatches to weight his possession of that name, the fact that he is the legal descendant of the first chief will add a certain amount to his prestige, but unless he has been able to do this his influence will be slight.

Thirdly, potlatches smooth the way for the giver after death. Before the corpse of a chief is removed from the house where he has died, a speaker always announces the number of potlatches he has given and the total value of goods distributed at them. These gifts in a vague way are felt to make easy the deceased's path in the next world as they have done in the present. The feature of the potlatch, though firmly believed by some of the older people, plays a less important part in the life of the Bella Coola than might be expected.

What are the requisites for giving a potlatch?

(1) Possession of an ancient myth, containing a name or names. Probably every Bella Coola has this requirement. A man's family may not be the proud owners of one of the ancestral myths dealing with the first settlement of this earth, but they will at least own some ancient myth which they can elevate by giving a potlatch. As has been said, the owner of one of the most ancient names in many cases chooses to elevate one of lesser antiquity, a course which must, perforce, be done by one who lacks an origin myth. The slight feeling of deference with which those are regarded who hold the names of the first inhabitants of the earth, the mighty chiefs of old, is subordinate to the very real feeling of respect in which is held the successful giver of potlatches. The descendant of one of the first people has the potential right to chieftainship, but unless he can give potlatches he will fail to gain that eminence.

(2) An occasion for giving a potlatch is never lacking. It consists of a number of closely associated rites, any one of which will serve as a reason for the ceremony. The most important feature, the return of a dead ancestor or ancestors to visit the living, is available to anyone at any time. The Bella

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PLATE II

Photograph by the author

A Bella Coola couple with their dogs; the one on the left is a chief.

[4 186 (c)]

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Coola say that the return of the dead "washes away grief," and unquestionably it has a comforting effect on the mind of the donor of the potlatch.

(3) Wealth. Unless a man has the necessary goods with which to make presents he cannot invite guests, no matter how important may be his ancestral myths and names. Some of this wealth he may be able to amass by his own labours, but unless he is assisted by his wife's family it is virtually impossible for him to succeed. The Bella Coola believe that a man cannot become a chief except through large payments made by a woman's family when they "rebuy" her from her husband. In other words, no man can succeed without the support of his wife. In choosing a mate a man is guided almost entirely by the ability of her family to give him financial support. In some cases an elderly couple assist a married son to give a potlatch; this custom, though considered quite proper, is not common.

(4) Supernatural assistance. To the Bella Coola this is quite as important as the preceding. One man may work very hard but his efforts are never crowned with success, whereas another man will prosper in every venture. This is due to the supernatural attributes given by the supreme god to the latter. By prayer, ceremonial chastity, and other means, a man may increase the powers granted to him, but if these are entirely lacking, he can never hope to rise to the position of chief.

PRELIMINARIES

In describing the potlatch, it will be convenient to refer to the donor as X, and assume him to be a middle-aged member of the *nusk* society, whose seat and name, though duly ratified, lack importance through his previous failure to give large presents.

For a number of years X has prospered. He has amassed quantities of skins, blankets, tools, copper ornaments, clothing, canoes, baskets, dentalium shell, slaves, and other valuables.

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203 522 *556 in such a way that the contents dribble over the recipient; sometimes, though able to catch the dish, a herald may deliberately allow the sticky pulp to cover him. The humour of this is increased by the fact that guests at potlatches always receive their food in a ceremonious manner.

203 *556 [773] Though one of a herald's duties is to act as buffoon, his position is only very slightly derogatory. In the beginning of time, Raven himself did not hesitate to act in this capacity on many occasions. Ever since, this post has usually been occupied by relatives of chiefs, especially by those who are unable to give potlatches. In some cases the position is sought by ambitious young men, willing to endure the slight loss of dignity for the emoluments. Since the basic principle of every Bella Coola ceremony is that the donor must recompense those who have assisted him, heralds are always lavishly rewarded. At potlatches especially, chiefs remember their dependence upon the heralds, and shower presents upon them. One who has allowed himself to be spattered with liquid food to amuse the guests, is suitably compensated, but in any case he receives presents for summoning and seating the guests and for interrupting the speeches. The same principle holds good in all other ceremonies. An elderly informant related that once in his younger days he had been dancing a *nusaé* dance, when two heralds remarked that the ground on which he was dancing was dirty, meaning, that it had not been made clean by the distribution of sufficient presents to justify his dance. His mother at once gave the heralds two muskets, valuable articles in those days, to clear her son's path. These belonged to the informant, who knew nothing about the transaction until it had been completed, but he accepted as a matter of course the necessity of giving presents to heralds. If the seat on which a chief is sitting should break, presents must be given to heralds, and if a *kaxiat* should fall when a herald is watching, the latter receives gifts. At the marriage of a chief's son, a herald can claim and remove any of the clothing of the bridegroom or his associates. Above all other occasions, when a young chief is

[622] [585]

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211 example, there is a description of his totem-pole with a bell
556 at the top, and beneath it an eagle's nest containing two fledg-
778 lings towards which a grizzly bear is endeavouring to climb.
532 This is the only known instance of a pole on which the different figures stand in definite relationship to one another. No explanation is offered beyond the statement that this was the form used by *Älkai* in the beginning of time. Another ancient [778] pole, used by one of the ancestral families of *Łaxsel*, consists of a simple shaft surmounted by a sphere; this represents a mountain which enters into their ancestral myth as supporting the sky.

As with all features embodied in ancestral myths, a chief can use his own discretion in cases where he has a choice of [431] design. A totem-pole with specific figures is a common present from a chief to his son-in-law, and it is a mark of respect [422] for the latter to use and validate this at the first opportunity, [604] in preference to one belonging to his own ancestral family. Since the pole erected at a potlatch may have no association with the ancestral name and myth of the donor, the underlying principle in all cases is that the value of the pole depends upon the quantity of gifts distributed to validate its erection. One man mentioned an instance in which he had become confused with regard to the proper design for the totem-pole connected with his ancestral myth, and had used one belonging to a second myth in association with a name from the first. Both were his property, the transaction was duly validated, and the matter passed off without question. It is possible that the [783] decay of custom which has followed the coming of the white man may have been partly responsible for this error, which was regarded as a somewhat stupid, though not improper mistake; yet it is clear that even when designs are remembered as portions of ancestral myths, they can be alienated from them and validated as isolated objects in the same manner as names and all other features of ancestral myths.

More often, the exact details of a pole are not included in the ancestral myth and a chief wishing to have one erected can

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Boas Collection

Incest and cases of rape were either unknown or very rare. The daughters of chiefs, too, were guarded with great care and any effort to seduce one of them would be punished by her father. The parents of a girl used to watch her carefully, and the opportunity for immorality was not great in the days when everyone went to bed at sundown except on the occasion of a ceremonial dance. As one informant described it:

"The daughters of chiefs used to be looked after as if they were in boxes, cherished and guarded by their parents and relatives. No one would dream of molesting them. And a chief's daughter used to be proud and look after herself. Nowadays, girls don't care, and everything has become degraded."

If the daughter of a chief did dishonor herself, the parents lost interest in her, as one who was spoilt. It was always assumed that a girl of rank was a virgin at marriage, and if it was discovered that she had been living an immoral life, her husband in many cases returned her in disgrace to her parents who, equally shamed, were expected to send back to him the goods he had expended for their daughter. Loss of virtue was judged only from indirect information. If the daughter of a chief was found pregnant before marriage, she was almost ostracized by her family. No ceremonial marriage could be arranged for her, and the child could not be cleansed from the stigma of illegitimacy.

On the other hand, it appears certain that there was a good deal of intercourse in the old days between chiefs and slave women, or even between slaves and the daughters of chiefs. In the latter case the woman was often cast aside by her relatives though they sometimes yielded to the inevitable and tried to wash away the disgrace with gifts. At the same time, public opinion was unfavourable to a man who concerned with many women, or to a woman who allowed herself to be at the disposal of many men. Any regular union of masters with their slave women for the deliberate purpose of having children was unknown. A girl's consent was always necessary, given either personally or through an intermediary. Even a chief hesitated

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to kill an enemy, but his success is accredited to his supernatural possessions which have given him skill as a warrior rather than to his own ability.

It is felt that no ordinary explanation is sufficient to account for the death of a great chief. No matter what may have been the actual cause, it is always said that the supernatural Carpenters, who in the beginning of time created mankind, came down and "seized" or "called back" the deceased, thinking him too good for this world. It is believed that these beings are keen hunters, and that *Alquonsim* allows them to pursue influential people. This sentiment is always expressed in mourning songs for a dead chief, but although accepted as a matter of fact, it is little more than a formalized belief which serves to comfort the mourners. The infraction of a taboo is another reason frequently given for a chief's death. It is said that there was a loud crash and the earth shook before the death of *Pakka*; he became ill immediately, and his stomach began to swell. The stricken chief said that *Sung'* itself had fallen upon him, but the common belief was that he had erred in some ritual act. At any rate, he died within a few hours.

RITES FOLLOWING DEATH

News of a critical illness spreads rapidly through the village and the house in which the sufferer is lying becomes a rendezvous for friends asking about his condition. Failure to do so would be considered ungracious, with the result that there is such a constant coming and going that rest is denied the sick person. Shamans are called upon to practise their powers in a noisy manner, and female relatives weep and wail. The din is indescribable.

When the patient shows no further indication of life, the shamans cease, but the women redouble their cries. Relatives, friends, and sympathizers all crowd into the house and begin to weep, often adding verbal lamentations. The progress of the news from house to house can be traced by the wailings. Mem-

1:McDowell E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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965 religious rites affecting the whole community. In spite of the prohibitions enforced, it is said that a widow or widower usually becomes fat after the death of a partner. This observation agrees with several instances known to the writer, but whether it is of universal application is doubtful, although the Bella Coola emphatically state that this is the case.

Memorial Rites

THE MEMORIAL POTLATCH

177 The most important, as well as the most complicated, mourning rite is the memorial potlatch, *ekwunit*, for which so much wealth is required that it can be carried out by chiefs alone. This ceremony, being associated with *nusuk* rites, has altered enormously in form within recent years. Before the introduction of cone-shaped whistles and other foreign elements, it was almost indistinguishable from an ordinary potlatch and the two were occasionally combined, having as central feature the return of the deceased in the form of his crest. Among the tribes of the outer coast, especially the Bella Bella, the two types of ceremonial were apparently distinct, and as the Bella Coola adopted more and more of their neighbours' *nusuk* ritual, they followed their custom in this respect as well. It is said that a certain *Nuskila*, uncle of a man about sixty years of age in 1922, was the last to combine both. The Bella Bella felt that he had thereby committed a ritual error for which he would be punished; within a few years he died, and the Bella Coola assumed that this was due to the unanimous expectation of his death on the part of the Bella Bella. From that time onwards, the Bella Coola were careful to separate features belonging to potlatches from those of memorial potlatches.

After a comparatively few years, the white man's dominion had increased so enormously on the central coast that the potlatch, including both types, was prohibited by law. Owing to the consequent difficulty of performing complicated

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
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rites, the Bella Coola were again led to carry out at a single gathering features which properly belonged to several. To combine the memorial potlatch with the potlatch, being a return to an earlier custom, presented no serious difficulties and was consequently widely adopted. The Kimsquit people, moreover, seem never to have adopted the clear Bella Bella differentiation, and as the rapid decrease in population threw them in ever closer contact with the Bella Coola, their influence tended to lessen differences between the two ceremonials.

At the present time, a memorial potlatch is almost identical with an ordinary potlatch in practice. The same rites are often carried out at both; each varies considerably, and when the distinctive elements are omitted the two become indistinguishable. None the less, they are never confused in the minds of the participants. The house where a potlatch, &c., is taking place is called a *nuslimsta*, that where a memorial potlatch, *skwanit*, is occurring, a *nuskwanātsta*. In giving invitations and making comments, heralds are careful not to refer to the ritual under the wrong name; in fact, it may be said that the chief difference between the two is in the minds of the donor and his guest. Sociologically, both are considered to be on a par. Equal wealth is required, and each can be performed only by a chief, both on account of the expenditure involved and owing to the difficulties in procedure which are thought to be too great for a lesser man to surmount.

Difference in the donor's motives is usually sufficient to separate a memorial potlatch from an ordinary one. The latter is given by a chief desirous of increasing his prestige by lavish expenditure, for which one of the excuses is the validation of the appearance of a dead relative. Although this is the central feature, so many other rites are performed that it is sometimes obscured or may, indeed, be omitted entirely. On the other hand, a memorial potlatch occurs as soon as possible after the death of a father, mother, or other dearly loved kinsman, and it is clear to all that the donor's reasons for the rite are to commemorate the deceased, and to console himself and his imme-

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of different ancestral families to which the deceased belonged, irrespective of whether or not he had used a name from one. Being a member of the group, its songs can legally be used in his honour. Elements from different myths are often combined into one composition, corresponding to the different localities and characters which the dead person has visited in travelling back the path of his multiple ancestors to the beginning of time. If one person only is being commemorated, four songs are prepared; if several, two are used for each. Three for any individual is unlucky. Two types, *skwanät* and *änultsnänk*, are in common usage, and the singers, after conversation with the donor of the ceremony, decide which shall be employed. The former describes in some detail features from one or more of the deceased's ancestral myths, mentions the journey which he has taken to visit the individuals and scenes referred to, and calls on him to assume the form of his first forefather. A common theme is to state the origin of his name, and how he loved it so greatly that he left the earth to follow it back through time and space. The following is an abbreviated version of such a song, based on the origin myth of *Kăliăkŭs*:

"We have been unable to satisfy you here. Go whither *Kăliăkŭs* came, and become a raven. Go to the east and get abalone-shell; go to the west and get copper. They will satisfy you."

Another *skwanät* of the same type is:

"Your first ancestor circled the world with the aid of an abalone-shell paddle. Do you likewise. That will gratify you as nothing on earth could do."

On the other hand, an *änultsnänk* seldom refers to the ancestral history of the deceased, but to his actions during life. It records the number of slaves, canoes, and other valuables given away at potlatches,[35] and alludes to other praiseworthy actions. This type of mourning song, though usually used

[35] An analogous method of making known a man's distribution of wealth is by a written sign over his door (see Plate 24).

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only for a chief, can be employed for a dead child. In this case, the theme describes the efforts of the parents to incorporate the deceased in the traditions of their ancestors, and the number of times he had been ceremonially married. The text of one used a few years ago is:

"We said, Hail! *Sinxălotla* [the child's crest was the Sun] when she was born. What more could we have done? Why did she leave us?"

The text may refer to the prerogative of employing mourners, as in the following:

"Come ye professional mourners, help me to give voice to my lamentations."

The tunes of mourning songs are usually remembered from year to year, and the singers may merely alter words to make an old song applicable. In some cases, such compositions are changed so slightly that they become virtually possessions of an ancestral family, and may then be preserved for generations until even the history of the names embodied is forgotten. Occasionally, ancient relationship between two such groups can be deduced from the occurrence of the same names in their mourning songs, although all traditions of intermarriage have been forgotten. There is considerable difference between the tunes of *skwanăt* and *ănulhnănk*; in fact, this distinction may be more important than the themes, since the latter do not invariably conform to the types just described. A few items of ancestral history may be incorporated into a song dealing primarily with the actions of the deceased and *vice versa*. Sometimes four of one type are used, sometimes two of each. Much thought is devoted to the compositions, the singers meeting every day to try over and improve one another's efforts. The texts, long and complicated, require much practice, since any error would be an admission of gross inefficiency. These daily rehearsals take place in the donor's house and he is required to provide food for the singers. It is not uncommon to use a song of Bella Bella origin, since the Bella Coola admit that members of that tribe excel in compositions of this type.

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537 viated by the presence of welcome guests. Mention is fre-
556 quently made of the journey taken by the dead man to the
769 scenes of his ancestral myths. In addition to being an orator,
[622] the speaker must also be a *numitl* chief, since it is felt that none other can have the necessary assurance and poise to refer to these most sacred and important subjects. During the speech, assistants blow eagle down over the heads of all present.

Food has been prepared in advance, and as soon as the speaker has finished, the heralds call the guests to partake of it. The first course is then distributed, smoked salmon mixed
[264] with olachen grease. Speeches are sometimes delivered during this part of the meal, as well as at the second course, cranberries with more olachen grease. If the guests have arrived during the afternoon, there is no delay between the feast and the ritual that follows, but if they have come during the morning, there is a gap until the evening. Visitors usually time their arrival for the early part of the afternoon.

537 The next event is a speech from one of the foreign chiefs,
556 phrased in grandiloquent terms similar to those used by the
769 Bella Coola orator. He speaks of the manner in which the
609 supernatural Carpenters have hunted the deceased, but reminds
533 his hearers that this is because *Alquntăm* has decreed it, therefore all must be for the best. He refers to the dead man's crest, and to the manner in which this guise will be available to him. During the day, the singers have been careful to learn the tune of a mourning song used by the ancestral family of each foreign chief likely to speak. This they now beat out, often assisted by some of the guests, and always accompanied by their singing. No one dances to accompany the song; it is merely a tactful mark of sympathy, implying that the speaker himself knows the grief occasioned by death, and, also, that he too is sufficiently important to be able to use a mourning song. If, as is usually the case, there is more than one influential chief in the party, a second rises to speak, repeating in different terms the sentiments expressed by his predecessor. Another

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764 159 stepson, George Nelson, had not been living with his wife for about one year.

Early in the afternoon of June 27, Captain Schooner was notified by telephone of the serious illness of his daughter at the cannery where she was working. He set out immediately, but found her dead on his arrival. Without waiting to consult Samuel King, he called together the chiefs who happened to be [622] in the vicinity, Willie Mack, Jim Pollard, Billy Pollard, Bobby Nebby, and Alexander Clallaman.[1] He informed them that 764 he did not propose to let his daughter be thrown carelessly into 769 the ground like a dog, but that he was going to hold a memorial potlatch immediately after the funeral. Schooner, being a *556 *numitl* chief as well as father of the dead woman, was able to 159 do as he liked, and no one objected to this plan, although in [178] former times such a ceremony neither took place at once, nor in summer. If Samuel had been present, he would have been consulted as a matter of course. It was quite fitting for Jessie to be buried by her father, since she had borne her husband no children, and had been rebought several times. Moreover, Samuel lacked the determination and prestige of his father-in-law. Having settled this main point, Captain Schooner intimated that as Jessie's granddaughter, Dan Nelson's infant, was at the point of death, it would be well to combine the mourning for both at the single ceremony. No mention was made of the amount to be used for the rite. Schooner himself had $200 to expend for the purpose which would have been sufficient, and his attitude was that he neither knew nor cared whether his relatives would assist him. Soon after the other chiefs had left, Reuben Schooner arrived from the logging-camp from which he had been summoned. Father and son discussed arrangements not only for the actual interment, a simple matter, but for the memorial potlatch. It was decided that the dead woman should return as a composite figure consisting

[1] None of these was closely related to the Schooner family.

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lowed the actor, blowing eagle down over him repeatedly. After one circuit of the hall, the performer passed out through the front door, from the vicinity of which was heard once more the large whistles and the screaming of the eagle, both growing less distinct as if the bird were flying away.

The wearer of the mask displayed considerable dramatic talent and succeeded in giving a realistic display in spite of the glaring lights which exposed his bare feet and betrayed the human handicraft of the mask in a manner impossible in the native type of house with a single, central fire as the sole illumination. The Carriers had watched the performance with interest, probably tinged with contempt, but to the Bella Coola it was no mere spectacle, it was a religious rite of the highest importance. All the spectators realized that the figure was human, but this seemed inconsequential as they gazed upon the representation of the dead woman in the form of her crests, to which they believed she had been transformed by death. Even the children were silent, and the only sound during the passage was the wailing of a sleepy infant. The eagle crest belonged to Jessie by virtue of membership in the ancestral family descended from her father's first ancestor, traced patrilineally, who had come to earth at *Tcimotl* in the form of this bird. The blackfish was a crest acquired through her mother; the raven represented a copper given belonging to an ancestral myth of the dying grandchild. In former times, carpenters would have worked for weeks preparing an elaborate composite figure, but Captain Schooner wished no delay in the ceremony for fear of police interference, so that it was necessary to use what masks happened to be in existence and to place them in conjunction by means of the crude white sheet. Jessie had not been initiated into the *sisaok* society, but no opposition was raised to the use of *sisaok* whistles both on account of her status as chief, and owing to the influence of her father who, a *nemiit* chief, feared no restrictions and heeded no conventions. Besides, both her brothers were influ-

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769 *556 ential *sisaok*. In former times it is certain that objections would have been raised to this breach of ceremonial privilege.

[424 178 575 622] There was a pause for several minutes after the withdrawal of the figure. Then Reuben threw a copper on the floor in the track taken by the actor "to make bone for the dead woman." A number of chiefs went forward to join the singers and discuss whether or not the copper should be redeemed. No one wished to do so, so Captain Schooner said he would have it fastened to a post over Jessie's grave, a proposition to which all agreed.

769 *556 533 After interminable discussion in which Captain Schooner, Nebuchadnezzar, Reuben Schooner, Jim Pollard, and Alec Davis took the principal parts, it was decided to sing the fourth mourning song at this point. There was no reason why this should not have been done at the customary time, after the other three, but wide latitude in detail was allowed in this [178] ceremony; in fact, exact ritual never flourished in Bella Coola and has become increasingly rare in recent years. This song had been composed a number of years previously when Captain Schooner had called in the Bella Bella to a memorial potlatch, and great care had been expended on its composition owing to the skill of the guests in songs of this type. The words, altered to fit the circumstances, were phrased as if George and Dan were lamenting the loss of their mother and other relatives.

"I, we," they ran, "are thinking of our mother, our brothers, our sisters, our mother's brothers, our mother's sisters, our father's brothers, our father's sisters, of all our dead relatives. Please, ye chiefs from abroad, turn your heads, listen to our wail. You revered great ones, let us all cry together. It is we who have called you hither; look upon us."

This song was sung in the manner already described, except that more of the Bella Coola were familiar with the words and tune and could accordingly join in.

769 *556 Meanwhile Captain Schooner, with his sons Reuben and Harry and his grandsons George Nelson and Andy Schooner, had been crouching in a corner of the hall, poring over the money which was to be distributed to validate the ceremony,

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769 sum being used for each name, and the bills were displayed
*556 before messengers carried them to the recipients.

Finally, Jim Pollard took the opportunity to bestow on
553 Captain Schooner the name, *Snusilkāls*. This designation
425 was the property of the donor's ancestral family and should
[614] not have been transmitted without the consent of all its mem-
[622] bers. Jim had probably informed several of them of his intention, but no objections would have been raised if he had overlooked this courtesy, since he is the only *numitl* chief among them, and the only one with determination and prestige. It was not an outright gift, since it was announced that it must be returned to the donor's family on Captain Schooner's death. Jim Pollard acted as his own announcer for this transaction, explaining that he gave the name in gratitude for the help which Captain Schooner had rendered at the death of his, Jim's, father about twenty years before. He promised that at the earliest opportunity he would give presents to validate the transmission.

769 During the lengthy distribution of money, the audience had
*556 shown unmistakable signs of weariness. It was now between 2.00 and 3.00 A.M., and as soon as Jim had finished speaking the guests dispersed quietly, though many of them gathered in groups in one another's houses to discuss what had taken place.

Captain Schooner slept late after the lengthy ceremony, but was proud and contented when interviewed about noon. He felt that what was fitting for his daughter had been performed, and was willing to take the consequences of having broken the law.

768 Little else of note occurred in connection with Jessie's funeral. Samuel King deposited near her grave a sewing-machine which his wife had used for only a short time and Captain Schooner decided to replace this with an older one belonging to his wife. He made this exchange on the afternoon of June 30, when Samuel, in company with a number of women, was burning the rest of Jessie's clothing and possessions. Captain Schooner explained his act by saying:

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in the second, as indicated by their diminished population. It is also said that about 1850, when a party of Bella Coola had camped for the night near Ocean Falls, one of the sleepers wakened his comrades by calling on them to look at the brilliant lights. No one then understood what he meant, but the meaning has become clear since the installation of electric lights in the town.

In addition to the preceding, a number of stories of the regular shaman type were collected, in which, however, the principal figure is said to have been a *snāẋom*. They are included in this section for the reasons already mentioned.

A POTENTIAL *Snaẋom*

The mother of an elderly Bella Coola used to receive direct communications from *Ălquntăm* which gave her the necessary qualifications for a *snāẋom*, though she did not wish to exercise her power. She was able to see over the whole earth, and to talk to sun, moon, and stars in a language which the other Bella Coola did not understand. She built a small house for herself in the woods where she usually slept alone; sometimes her husband joined her, but he was always afraid of the gigantic toads and other monsters that were her companions.

THE WOMAN WHO COULD CALL THUNDER

About one hundred years ago there was living in a village at the mouth of the Dean River, a man, *ᵘxwinxdle*, and his wife, *Snaẋwaix*. He was a famous hunter who frequently observed ceremonial chastity and his wife claimed to be a shaman, but the inhabitants of the villages on both the Dean and Kimsquit rivers doubted this, as did also those living in the lower Bella Coola valley. *Snaẋwaix* was so boastful and disagreeable that at last the chiefs held a meeting and went one day to her house, where they told her that if she failed to give a satisfactory demonstration of her powers she would be killed.[22] Some were ashamed to doubt her word, but the consensus of opinion was that she should prove her claims, so they all sat down in her house and waited. She looked around and selected one man, *Kmlkal*, without apparent reason, and told him that he was to

[22] Such power on the part of chiefs is most unusual and, though it was related without comment by the narrator, should not be regarded as historically correct.

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754 would probably fall a victim. He became ill in May, 1923,
961 and, though treated by a white doctor, grew steadily worse
789 until he died in the latter part of June, three weeks after the
828 year had elapsed. All the Bella Coola firmly believe that this
[622] was due to the power of thought. The father of the woman was a powerful chief whose thoughts were accordingly potent, and some consider that his concentrated desires and expectations were enough to kill the accused, while others believe that his expressed statements convinced others of the result, and that it was their combined thought that caused the death. It usually requires the thoughts of more than one individual to lead to this effect. The doctor who attended this man stated that his patient had shown symptoms of melancholy and resignation during his last sickness; it seems clear that the expectation of death must have lessened his chance of recovery.

771 A prominent theme in Bella Coola folk-lore is the belief
954 that a person cannot long survive who has made himself un-
828 popular. It is sometimes stated that a magical means was
[538] employed to remove him, and this was no doubt often the case; a person who learns that a "medicine" had been employed to kill him is in no fit mental condition to counteract the power of suggestion, particularly if he knows that others are aware of what has been done. His death is regarded as proof of the efficacy of the means employed and the belief of others grows stronger. As already stated, this conviction still survives.

[648] When this ethnological investigation was being conducted, a point under discussion was whether or not the Kimsquit people should be allowed to live in Bella Coola. One chief took the lead in objecting and everyone expected that, having thus roused the ire of would-be immigrants, he would die. He did so soon afterwards, and it is universally believed that it was caused by the concentration of the hostile thoughts of the Kimsquit. Simi-

[784] larly, the potency of taboos is increased by the fact that since time immemorial the thoughts of everyone have been opposed to any infraction. Consequently, an offender is liable to punishment both for breaking an injunction and because he

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789 ceremonial dances without making mistakes. The Bella Bella
856 paint a representation of a wolf's bladder for the same purpose.
[532] The basis of this medicine is the belief that it is the gall-
[826] bladder which causes wildness and intelligent fear, and hence
[825] that anyone so treated will be careful not to make mistakes. A bird with a large bladder is thought to be difficult to approach, whereas a deer, which has a small one, or none at all, is often stupidly brave. This medicine is known only to the mem-
[424] bers of certain families and is used for the children of chiefs
[622] alone, since errors on the part of others is a matter of little importance.

MEDICINES OF CHILDHOOD

789 Some of the instruction given to boys and girls, and the
856 acts which they are enjoined to perform, are virtually religious,
771 and have accordingly been described in earlier chapters. For example, when a lad washes in the river before daybreak, scours himself with a smooth stone and prays to *Alquntăm*, he is carrying out what might with justice be called a religious act. If, however, he believes that mere washing is enough to compel some desire or end, it is magical. Different Bella Coola have different sentiments concerning the exact means by which this method causes the desired effect. To some it is unquestionably a true prayer, but in other families it is customary for a father to take his son, when he has reached about eight years of age, and wash him four times, to the accompaniment of the usual prayer. It is believed that this causes the lad to grow up powerful and active, constantly striving for success. This type of washing may be called magical.

789 In the following there is no element of uncertainty; they
856 belong unquestionably to the category described in the preceding section.

To Cause Agility

The following medicine is frequently employed by fathers when their sons are first able to walk:

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It is said that one man accidentally sucked when spitting on a toad, and swallowed the creature. It lived within his stomach for fifty years, causing no discomfort though its master could feel it moving, and its singing could be heard at intervals. This brought him no supernatural power, although he was enabled by it to live to a great age. When at last he died, the toad came hopping out of his throat and was carried respectfully to the river by his friends who covered the creature with eagle down and dyed and undyed cedar-bark.

Some of the rites already described with regard to animals and fish are similar in nature to this medicine.

To Cause Obesity

A medicine was formerly used by chiefs to make them fat and important-looking, but details of it have been forgotten.

To Cause Ability in Singing

Catch an *ayaxon·i* (varied thrush?) alive and pat it four times against the throat of the woman to whom it is desired to impart the art, saying:

"May she be a singer like you."

Release the bird and the woman will become a good singer.

This bird is considered by the Bella Coola to be the finest songster among British Columbia birds, and they say that many animals and fish, including even the halibut, gather to hear its singing.

To Cause Ability in Hunting

There is a poisonous plant which, when eaten, almost kills the eater. If he recovers, he is henceforth endowed with great ability as a hunter. The species could not be ascertained.

To Cause Change in Weather

If a cold wind is desired: Heat the penis of a mountain goat or beaver at a fire.

If rain is desired: Wash the penis of a large buck and throw it into the ocean or a river, saying:

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755 of water in which had been boiled eight splinters from a coffin. She would have obtained two from each side, and two from each end, in each case inserting the point of a crooked knife to pry loose a fragment of the wood, and then pulling it off in the same direction as the sun travels. It would have been immaterial from which aspect the first had been taken, but Y would have been careful to move around the coffin from east to south to west to north, corresponding to the course of the sun.

It is believed that no one has now the ability to use this cure.

Sorcerers

754 [424] Among the causative medicines of which knowledge has been handed down in various families for generations are secret means of killing. Every sorcerer must have such a possession, but he is not so branded unless he begins to exercise his powers for anti-social purposes. For example, if it be known that a [575] certain individual is able to cause death, the members of the *kusiut* society are eager to admit him to their group, so that his ability will be at their disposal to punish anyone who breaks their regulations. Likewise, if a chief decides that a certain [622] man should die, the power of his thoughts may suffice to cause the death, but the desired end will be effected more certainly by requesting aid from the owner of a means of killing. Such [756] an individual is frequently a shaman who is only too glad of an opportunity to exhibit his powers. The following methods of execution are said to have been employed socially, that is, with the connivance or at the request of chiefs or the members of the *kusiut* society:

(1) The executioner scratches for four successive nights on the door of the victim's house. If the latter suspects what is to take place, he may endeavour to escape by remaining awake which renders the scratching powerless. It is said that no one has been able to remain sleepless for more than three nights which gives the killer his opportunity.

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[The Dance of Wil·a]

About dusk on the following day X, who is in his own house, suddenly stands up and cries out:

"Yes. It has come. I am afraid. Yes! I will do as you bid me."

The *kukusiut* women begin to drone and the uninitiated are expelled. Heralds announce that a *kusiut* has been pressed to earth, and presently they go to every house inviting the *kukusiut* to gather in X's. From this point on, the rite of *Inxtämem* continues in the manner already described.

The ability of X to summon these nine brothers from above is a special prerogative; other *kukusiut* have one or other of them as patron, but lack the power to call the whole number to earth. One *kusiut* has exclusive knowledge of the mat which is spread for *Omqomkilkɛ* when the other supernatural beings summon him to a ceremony; another of the place where the brethren obtain their eagle down. Detailed information was not obtained about these ceremonies.

THE CANNIBAL DANCE

Of all *kusiut* dances, the one of which the uninitiated are most afraid, and which is, therefore, the strongest, is the Cannibal dance. It is believed that the performer is exposed to greater dangers than in any other rite, and observers have the most spectacular ocular demonstrations of his powers. The patrons of most Cannibals are *Älquntäm*, *Sxexɛ̈älaiy*, or *Kämai·ɛs*, who implant in their protégés a wolf, bear, or eagle, causing them to devour strange foods. The Bella Coola consider that a man is equally a Cannibal whether he has the prerogative of eating corpses, biting the living, eating dogs or raw salmon, or biting himself. The most common of these is the right to bite the living, and few of the older people are not scarred thereby. Fear of Cannibals is one of the strongest causes for the respect with which the uninitiated regard the *kusiut* society, but though the holders of prerogatives of this type are regarded with awe on account of their powers, they are not considered as chiefs, as the Bella Coola say is the case

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[Re Cannibal Dance]

among the Bella Bella, Fort Rupert, and Rivers Inlet people. Indeed, in Bella Coola a poor man may be the most dreaded Cannibal of all, if he has been able duly to validate and perform his right in this respect. Nor is the dance carried out with the same rigour in Bella Coola as among the tribes of the outer coast.

The ritual of different prerogatives varies to such an extent that several accounts must be given, in spite of the repetitions that this form of presentation entails. On account of the length of time necessary, a Cannibal dance usually begins early in the season. The following describes the manner in which *Kämätsäks* of Kimsquit, who can bite the living, carried out his rite; it was obtained from his brother, who is thoroughly conversant with the details. It will be convenient to refer to *Kämätsäks* as X, and to use the present tense throughout.

A meeting is held at which the marshals and others choose, in agreement with X and his relatives, a day suitable for him to commence his performance. Under normal circumstances it is on some *qaiaw* that a marshal announces that he can hear X's call, and on the following evening, when the ritual has been completed, the uninitiated are startled to hear continuous whistling from the slopes of the mountains near the village. The instruments used are of the usual bladder type, but the long-drawn-out sound, termed *Ätsätsa*, is said to be the voice of the kindly supernatural woman, *Snitsmäs-a*.[*]

[*] The sole function of this being seems to be the restoring to life of those who appear to have been killed in the performance of *hamat* rites. The Bella Coola are uncertain whether or not she is identical with *Tlätqätläwa*. The noise which heralds her coming is produced by the whistles of four *hokaetat* who throughout the night range the forests and mountains within ear-shot of the village. By bending their heads up and down, they are able to increase the weirdness and apparent clearness of the sound. The four travel in single file, the leader blows, and when his breath is nearly exhausted he presses the head of the second man, who starts whistling forthwith, while the original leader drops to the rear. As the second becomes weary, he signals in the same way to the third, and so on; in this way the whistling is continuous, and the uninitiated are convinced that it cannot be caused by mortals, even if such an idea should occur to them. If a non-member should meet the four, they would at once kill him or make him a prisoner, keeping him out of sight until he could be initiated into the society.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

CHAPTER III

WARFARE[1]

General Observations — Specific Accounts

General Observations

721 648 PRIOR to the establishment of British rule, there was considerable warfare among the coastal tribes of British Columbia. Long-continued struggles leading to the extermination of one or other of the participants were unknown, but there were constant raids, counter-raids, forays, and attacks. These were never as continuous as on the Plains, where martial achievements were regarded more highly than on the coast, but it appears probable that at least several villages of the Bella Coola were embroiled every few years. Nevertheless, [794] war was secondary in importance to ceremonial rites. During the winter, peace reigned and members of hostile tribes were [556] even received as guests at some dances. At potlatches they might be subjected to insult, later to be avenged in the same manner or by active hostility, but seldom was actual violence offered either to envoys or guests. The symbol of peace and 726 friendliness was eagle down; the occupants of a canoe who 825 bore an invitation to a potlatch, or who were guests them- 778 selves, used to blow this substance up into the air whenever another craft approached, and it was incumbent on the latter [484] to veer over to the other side of the channel. Eagle down was [578] considered to be so sacred that when two men were quarrelling [627] a chief could stop them by blowing some of it over their heads. 721 In winter, hostilities were prevented by ceremonies, and in summer the people were usually busy laying in supplies of food; consequently, it was only in the late spring that fighting was [575] at all common. Even then the dictates of ceremonial life were [622] not entirely forgotten; no *Aaxiat* novice went to war and

[1] Warfare having long been discontinued, the past tense is used throughout this chapter.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

seldom a chief who had given many potlatches. Successful raiders rarely slew such an one; his position placed him above the dangers to which lesser men were subject.

Raids appear never to have been carried out solely for the purpose of giving warriors opportunities to display their prowess, or of permitting young men to prove their mettle. Scarcity of food was the commonest cause for forays when, of course, the victims were chosen for their accumulated supplies. The Kwakiutl especially, lacking abundance of salmon, often attacked the Bella Coola. Even more dreaded were the Kitkatla, the most warlike people of the central coast, who used to raid for many miles to carry off slaves whom they sold or traded for other commodities. Trespassing, too, was a source of friction which often led to hostility. In such a case, the offenders were usually held up to ridicule at potlatches, and the irritation gradually increased until wiped out in bloodshed. Members of a tribe which had suffered from a raid prompted by any of these motives would await a suitable opportunity for retaliation; this in turn would be avenged, and a vendetta often ensued lasting for generations. As already described, a ceremonial error brought punishment from a neighbouring tribe; this was the only motive which caused fighting between different Bella Coola villages. In the last century there was a struggle of this kind between the people of *Stuxʷ* and *Ălqălăxl* in which the former were victorious and took many slaves who were later ransomed. When ill-luck had dogged a village or a group of villages for some time, the inhabitants sometimes endeavoured to wipe out their misfortunes by attacking another tribe.

The teeming salmon at Bella Coola, Kimsquit, and *Tăl'io*, made it unnecessary for the Bella Coola to wage aggressive war for which they were unfitted both on account of their unmilitary attitude and their lack of central authority. On the other hand, they were tempting victims for more belligerent neighbours. The narrow Bella Coola valley, however, far removed from the open sea, and densely populated, was difficult to attack.

J. McDowall: E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEA Bellacoola NEA

721 to attack. It is said that the Fort Rupert people once raided
48 it, but their hair became entangled in the thorns growing near
the tide-flats and they were easily slain while struggling to free
themselves. Two warriors escaped and hid in the branches
[727] of a huge spruce tree. They used to slip down at night and
steal food, thus supporting themselves for several weeks, but
[728] were at last discovered and ambushed. On such occasions the
villages of the lower and central valley usually rallied to the
help of *Kimquit*, the most exposed one, although there was
[774] no mechanism to enforce such assistance. The inhabitants of
this town attributed their protection to *Alquntam*, and used
to claim that he had decreed that they should be immune
[761] owing to their close association with him. Though Bella Coola
[762] itself was comparatively free from molestation, *Kimquit* and
Talio, with smaller populations and less strategic positions,
712 were subject to frequent attacks. At least one of the villages at
the head of South Dean Inlet was defended with a stockade
of cedar trunks, set upright in a double row and covered by a
[748] water-gun with a deep flume.[1] This water-gun protected the
[772] residents on many occasions, and it is remembered that one
Fort Rupert raiding-party was annihilated while endeavouring
to batter down the door with a huge ram. The defenders,
armed with muskets, picked off the attackers as they struggled
in the open.

721 All the older men were emphatic in stating that most of
their raids were in revenge for such attacks. Although such
statements were partisan, they were confirmed in every way
[742] and were probably tolerably correct. Lack of a strong govern-
[723] ment was a serious handicap to the Bella Coola. After being
[722] insulted, the members of the town would discuss retaliation,
and if unanimity of opinion was reached, that course was de-
[707] cided upon. Public opinion alone selected the leader, usually
a man who had given a number of potlatches, especially one
whose position had been made stronger by previous validation

[1] It is said that such stockades surrounded other villages, but definite information on this point was unavailable.

as a warrior. Such a chief had no command over his followers. If he were a man of great prestige, many would be willing to serve under him, but he could not compel the services of anyone except his own slaves. A few individuals often declined to follow their fellows to war, although the force of public opinion usually prevented a too individualistic course. Inhabitants of other towns used their own discretion whether or not to join the party. If some of their relatives had been slain in the previous attack, revenge influenced them to share in the retaliation, otherwise only the prestige of a mighty chief could attract them. No case is known in which all the Bella Coola villages joined in a single expedition; there were often temporary alliances between neighbouring settlements, but complete lack of central organization. The course of events was similar when a chief wished to raid without the motive of revenging an attack. For example, if a Bella Coola had been endowed by a foreign tribe and slain by his owner, a brother of the victim might decide on revenge. The usual course was to kill a slave belonging to the murderers, though sometimes he led a raiding party if he could gain the necessary support.

Each warrior provided his own weapons, frequently the same as those used for hunting. Bows with sinew-lipped grooves were most relied upon for offence, though slings were also used from canoes. Every man carried a spear, pointed like an arrow, for hand-to-hand fighting, although there was relatively little of this, most of the combats being fought at a distance with much noise, boasting, and explosions, but few casualties. Spears were, however, useful if the attackers succeeded in surprising a village at night. Hostilities are a thing of the past, consequently it was impossible to obtain detailed information respecting offensive weapons. Armour consisted of maple or birch slats reinforced with rosewhide and worn around the body and chest; this rendered quick movement difficult but was effective against arrows. Muskets were introduced many years ago and armour consequently became useless. Large shields of rosewhide were carried in all canoes,

the body to his own house, preparatory to burying it. It was April, but as they were waiting, a violent thunderstorm blew up from the east, the like of which had never occurred at that season. Thunder had promised to come to Frank's aid, but the latter had died so suddenly as to make any appeal, the supernatural one had just known of his grandfather's death and had come rushing to his assistance. Realizing the danger, the mourners and his friends hastily buried the corpse, covering over it a number of blood-stained planks, and finally stamping down the earth. There was a furious hurricane; trees were uprooted, houses shook, the earth over the grave seethed as if in a whirlpool and chunks of it were carried up into the air. Only the presence of the blood on the planks prevented the return to life of Frank.[1]

This second unsuccessful attack on the Kitkatla so disheartened the Bella Coola that they made no more raids on their northern foemen who, flushed with victory, became even bolder than before. As usual, the Kwaqutl and Tsimshian people suffered more than the inhabitants of the more remote. On one of these forays, about 1850, the Kitkatla killed Qaiamaitsut, a brother of Paska, the leading chief of the Bella Coola at the time. This was contrary to all the rules of warfare since he was a member of one of the leading families and the dance of many potlatches, a man whose name was as well known as that of Paska, Nalaqaitsum of Port Rupert, or Tsilcos himself. The loss of such chiefs was enough to protect them enough during the actual heat of conflict, and the Bella Coola were justly angry.

A few years later a single canoe came paddling up North Bentinck Arm and was hailed about half a mile from the head. Seven Kwakiutl were recognized, and returned to Q!umq!o with news that the occupants were Kitkatla, and that Tsilcos himself was among them. At once there was heated discussion among the people of the lower valley. Those who had lost relatives in the protracted struggle wished to wipe out the party; others, to see what they wanted. A few daring individuals dashed through the canoe and fired on the visitors at long range; they were answered, one with bullets, but by the four canoe-holding chiefs of a somewhat, a sign of friendly intentions. If the strangers had fired on the scouts, a fight would have ensued, but this peaceful reception disarmed suspicion.

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[1] This tale is a curious illustration of the manner in which supernatural elements become woven into accounts which have an historical basis. It is to be assumed that the incidents were in a supposedly more remote or primitive, and readily believed that supernatural powers must have assisted them. Frank was found as a woman, and probably boasted of a protection from Thunder during his wanderings. This was accepted and the interposition of legendary incidents followed in due course.

A. McDermith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NEB McDermith NEB
Thornton NEB

Pahos remained encamped for several days, during which time he sent word to the Bella Coola that he regretted the death of *Qalmaitsut* and had come to make peace. He added that his followers had tried to dissuade him, saying that he would be killed, but he had answered that he was too great a man to allow fear to influence his actions.

Having waited for several days, the party came up the Bella Coola River, their canoes loaded with presents and eight slaves, while Pahos's brother, *Ki-ulk-a*, wore the mask of his ancestors as further proof of friendly intentions. It was unusual to display one except in a ceremonial, but this was an unprecedented event; to have that be might soon be killed and he preferred to do this bearing the obvious mark of recognition with some incident of an unusual myth. The canoe was beached opposite the house of Pahos where the five blue eagle down men, the air to mark their peaceful mission. Men had gathered from all parts of the Bella Coola valley and several hundreds waited to disregard the safe-conducts and slay their enemies, a course which they had recommended for several days and had tried to precipitate by overt acts against the Kitkatla. Pahos himself had not spoken, but he was opposed and advised the people not to harm Pahos, since overbearing hostility would result. Though his wishes did not entirely quiet the angry men, they outwardly assured the Kitkatla of a welcome. Pahos brought forward a mountain-skin, and told some of his people to hold it spread as they, when Pahos leaps from his canoe, he would land upon it, and could be carried to the house without putting foot to the ground. Pahos expressed proudly that there was nothing on earth strong enough to oppose him, since his many protectors had made him incomparably heavy. Upon the top, he occupied the former, an assurance to binding chiefs only to highest chiefs, and was carried into the house where he was seated in the far right-hand corner, an honourable location. Pahos invited all the people in the vicinity, slaves as well as Bella Coola, and the inner partitions of the house had to be removed to provide space for the dining.

Though Pahos had decided against the immediate killing of the Kitkatla, he had concocted a scheme to test their bravery and the sincerity of their desire for peace. He was aware of this except his nephew, *Ki-mashlas*, who was to carry it out. When all were seated, the latter appeared, his face smeared with ashes, and his hair tied up in a top-knot with wound skins as is customary during war. *Ki-mashlas* danced around the house, brandishing a weapon and apparently pointing it at Pahos in a threatening manner. If the Kitkatla had shown nervousness, particularly if one of them had fled his own weapon, a massacre would have resulted. But they remained unmoved, confident in the prestige of their leader, while he knew that though his body might be

[illegible] McDonald E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

539[1] 682

[illegible] The man, [illegible], took careful aim at *Sokámtc-a*'s top-knot, but the musket had a flatter trajectory than he expected, so the bullet, instead of dropping and killing the man, flew straight and merely cut down the tuft on top of his head. *Sokámtc-a* ran off to the village and *Nacwáktc* was carried to the house of one of his relatives on the north bank of the river.

Conflicting reasons are given for this assault. Some state that *Sokámtc-a*'s unconscionable temper led him to fire; others that he did so on the orders of *Pudic*, who was offended because *Nacwáktc* had disobeyed an order to carry food home to his wife. It is whispered that on several occasions *Pudic* had used *Sokámtc-a* to get rid of those who had displeased him.

If the assault had been committed during the summer, revenge would have been an affair of the injured youth's relatives, but it occurred during the winter season so all members of the society were affected. A party was organized to arrest the offender with the aid of an American who happened to be at the Hudson's Bay Company's post at the time. *Sokámtc-a* was in the rear part of one of the houses at *Kimquc-ts* when his enemies entered and stood listening at the door. As he faced them, an old man, related to *Nacwáktc*, crept behind and leaped on him, wrapping his arms and legs around him. The murderer drew a knife and struggled furiously before he was overcome, bound and carried to *Alqúlstel* where his victim lived. *Sokámtc-a* pleaded that he had mistaken *Nacwáktc* for one of his Chilkoten relatives, to whom no attention was paid to this, he said that he had acted under orders from *Pudic*. This was likewise disregarded, nor was there any question of revenge on the alleged instigator since he, being a chief, could do as he liked. It is said that *Pudic* endeavoured to help his henchman by sending a message to some Chilkoten who were camped in the vicinity and inviting them to rescue their kinsman. [122]

Meanwhile it was obvious that *Nacwáktc* was seriously wounded. His relatives said that if he lived, they would be willing to accept compensation for the assault, so *Sokámtc-a* was kept, bound hand and foot, in a house where a [illegible] dance was taking place. During the night he almost succeeded in freeing himself from his bonds, but this was discovered and he was again tied up; it is possible that an accomplice assisted him in the attempt to escape. Towards dawn *Nacwáktc* died and it was decided that his murderer should be killed at once.

The [illegible] all helped to tie him outside and make preparations for shooting him, but no one dared the task of executioner. Meanwhile the Chilkoten were gathering, fight seemed imminent and the excite-

2:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

142 sally used but the older people state that beards were by no
144 means rare in former times. Careful inquiries were made
[302] concerning the ancestry of a man, about seventy years of age in 1922, whose curly beard suggests that he must be a half-breed, as indeed he is assumed to be by the white settlers of the valley. His father was *Putlas*, the most influential chief of recent years, his mother was herself the daughter of an important chief. None of the older men had ever heard the slightest rumour of faithlessness on her part. There were white
[648] traders on the coast at the time of his birth, and intercourse with
567 slave women and others of low family was not uncommon, but
622 it would have been difficult for a chief's wife to misconduct herself, and still more difficult for her to conceal all knowledge of it in view of the open life which prevailed at that period. Moreover, it is said that *Putlas* himself had a similar beard, as did also the parents of several men who in 1922 were fifty or sixty years of age.

142 Although the possibility of white mixture cannot be over-
144 looked in the case of this one individual, one must not dis-
826 regard the opinion of the people themselves on hairiness in
[302] general. They are proud of it and regard beards and moustaches as marks of virility given to them by *Alquntäm*; baldness and lack of facial hair are considered a sign of weakness. They aver that their fathers and grandfathers were even more
[186] hirsute than they. Furthermore, they point out with pride that this is a difference between themselves and the tribes of the interior, who are, as they say in scorn, "hairless like Chinamen." Finally, it is noteworthy that the hair on the head of many Bella Coola is wavy, or even curly (see Plate 70), instead of straight as among the majority of Indian tribes.[1]

Character

181 It is an almost impossible task to describe briefly the characteristics of a people. Those of the Bella Coola have

[1] This characteristic has led the writer to wonder if it could possibly have been caused by Ainu mixture.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

fathers. Inherited beliefs are too deep-rooted to pass away entirely within a few generations. Even those who claim to have adopted the new faith remain convinced of the potency of magic, and of the existence of those supernatural creatures which do not actively conflict with the white man's creed. Such lack of consistency is a world-wide trait, particularly intelligible among the Bella Coola whose philosophy abounds in contradictions, dependent upon statements handed down in the origin myths of different families.

The Bella Coola are constrained not only by the omnipresence of supernatural beings; they are constantly subjected to the influence of their fellows. They are far less individualistic than white people. A chief may boast that he can do as he pleases, that he can disregard the restrictions of lesser men; he often does so, but only because public opinion recognizes that he has reached a position of eminence by giving many potlatches. The duly validated warrior is brave because he feels that everyone is aware of his valour. The man who performs some ceremony in accordance with an ancestral myth incorporates himself with his forbears, and is strengthened by the conviction that he has gained their support and approbation. In every phase of life, a person is profoundly affected by the approval or disapproval of his neighbours. At present the construction of small houses, each occupied by a single family, makes it possible for a man to hide himself, or to do work unknown to the rest of the community. This lessens the force of public opinion, although it is even now more potent than conscience in checking anti-social acts. Formerly, in communal houses, every action was fully known, making individual freedom of thought and act virtually impossible. A man is chiefly influenced by his relatives who take a great share in what the white man would consider purely family affairs. The effect of the group upon the individual must not be overlooked, nor can it be over-stressed in a study of these people.

The education and conversion of the younger men have enormously lessened their reliance upon their fellows. In former

Ayaxit: Locality near Dean where berries are plentiful.
A'yaxit: Chief living at Tal'o in the beginning of time.

A

acn'kle: One of the *a'alk* dances.
ane: I, first person singular.
'ax: Hearing eggs when brought into house ready for preparation as food.[1]

B

Ankaf: Supernatural animal.
Bakbi': One of the four women sent down west of Kwatna in the beginning of time.
be'ghe: To guess, as done by the assistants at a Mystery dance.
Bookqumeiaw or *Bookqumeiakulaw*: Kwakiutl supernatural being.
cilik: Longway.
Delbeau: Kwakiutl name of a Smiths man.
dzaxa'a: Abalone shell.
Dzhemukle: Influential Kwatna woman who died about 1870.
dzpat: Bull-rapped hat worn by chiefs.
Ela'gmax: A Kimsquit component.
Ela'xaiaw: Dean men mentioned in an ancient story.
Enje: Supernatural, man-like creature.

D

da xaxq'"da xa xaxq'": The sky, regarded as the lower side of a land inhabited by supernatural beings.
Dakbal-ulaxv: 1—"The Comer," synonym for *Nusiyawas*.
2—The *Awitat* prerogative of saving *Nusiyawas*.
Dakbalaiaw, "The Ever-Comer": Synonym for *Nusiyawas*.
Dakbalaiaxuaxv: Supernatural being who awaits *Nusiyawas*.
Dakbalaiaxuaxv: Supernatural dog salmon resident in the land above.
di tsalpaxva di xaiaxv: Dixon's feathered.
di tsalpaxva xvi xvlaxvaiu: Aunt's feathered.
Dlqaxi'xaik: One of the first men to settle at *Bqaltlal* in the beginning of time.
dzvixa: Archaic term for *Awitat* Brother.[2]
dzaxlk: Frayed cedar-wood, as used for tinder.
dzaxlxlk, plural, *dzaklaxlxlaxv*: Son; term used in direct address for an adult.
Dzelkay: Man mentioned in an ancient story.
Dzi dzaxaxlk, "The Slave Owner": Designation of the supernatural women Kwatna.
Dzixlaxv: Collective term applied to the Kwakiutl-speaking peoples of the mainland.
Dzvalis-ux: Man mentioned in an ancient story.
Dzalxvaq'": Chief of abalone-shell people on the lower Dean in the beginning of time.
Dzalxvaq'": One of the first men to settle at Dean in the beginning of time.
Dzalxvqaiu: One of the first women to settle at Tal'o in the beginning of time.

[1] This word was recorded from a man with the individual usage of an *x* sound.
[2] This word was recorded from a man with the individual usage of an *x* sound.

2:McIlwraith E-9 (1922-1924) 1948
NEA Bellacoola NEA

nimlutsin: Intangible *hamat'sa* prerogative consisting of the insertion of some object into the digestive tract.
Nuqa: Expert supernatural dancer; to his ceremonies he is a yearling mountain goat.
nusq'ay nemlyakmut: First complete dance given by a *hamat'sa* initiate.
nuxwaak: Mustard, any kind.
Nuxwtsamaits: One of the names of Great Blue Heron as chief.
Nuxtlida: 1—One of the first men to settle on the upper Dean in the beginning of time.
2—One of the first men to settle at *Snaitl* in the beginning of time.
Nuxlyaxus: Supernatural being who brings the salmon.
Nuxmiwaxsdi: Name given to his grandson by one of the first settlers at *Gitlaxt'aa* in the beginning of time.
nuhaitsa: *Hamat'sa* prerogative as a Rocker; this is said to be a Bella Bella term.
nuhyitsa: Sloping stick extending from floor to roof behind the fire on which, at Komugwi, *hamat'sa* masks are hung.
nuwaqa: The making and use of food nets for chicken.
Nuxalayamuxw: 1—"The Adviser"; One of the names of the supreme god. [422]
2—Chiefs of a village, collectively, virtually, "The Sages."
na'nuxtsa: 1—Ceremony at which sound names are validated in the eyes of the fellow villagers. [553]
2—Any ceremony at which all kinds of dances are performed. [796]
na'nuqiyat: Assemblage of the *hahuxtsa* to practise difficult rites.
Na'qoms, "The One with Thick Palm Hair": Diminutive name given to a dancing wife.
Nanaxlala: One of the names of Raven as chief.
nemkilutkwas: Sentence of death passed by the *hahuxtsa* on one of their fellows as punishment for an error. [418]
nemlaxa: A hero, especially of an ancestral right. [424]
Nemlaxoms: Synonym for *Nuxlyaxus*, the supernatural being who brings the salmon.
Ne'nes, "Inheritable": Name taken by a woman in consequence of rights received from her husband's relatives.
nenkinaku: Taboo-feels.
nenxila: Birds.
Nenxilayas: Anthropomorphized evil wild winds. [421]
nenkit sis: Rhetorical term of respect for aged dead. [764]
nenkit sis da Kaxsis: 1—High title. [425]
2—Long life.
nenlipuxtu: Cross-pieces tied to canoe to hold chicken-nets post mortly while being driven.
Ne'qumuq, "Place of Fruit Water": Village in the lower Bella Coola valley.
Nesil[a]: 1—Village on head of South Bentinck Arm, on the east side.
2—River flowing into head of South Bentinck Arm from the east.
Nesilanuxtsa: Synonym for *Nuxmiwaxsdi*, an honored supernatural woman.
neqlit: The enforcement of supreme supernatural edicts, the term is used with reference to the selections of the maidens of the Winnowy dance.
netlaxaltsimaxw: Any ceremonial dance held on the conclusion of the *hamat'sa* season. [535]
Netlaxwas: An influential Kwakiutl chief.

Indians the tradition is considered much more clearly as property of the person who has it to charge them for it among the southeastern Indians. A description of the ritual ceremonial has been given by Jacobsen in the paper above referred to.[1]

A clan legend which is illustrated in the ritual is called by the Bella Coola "Semoma" or "Sem'yaem." The traditions are the exclusive property of each clan. The laws according to which they descend from generation to generation differ from the laws prevailing among the other Coast tribes. The inhabitants of each Bella Coola village are subdivided into clans, gentes, or septs; but each village community forms a unit, and possesses the same traditions. In order to keep the traditions in the tribe, the law requires that no person shall marry outside of his own village community. Thus the clan tradition is kept the exclusive property of the village community by means of endogamy. I have made very careful inquiries in regard to this point, and all the old men make substantially the same statement. Even marriages among near relatives are permitted, although marriages of people who are distantly related, or not related at all, are preferred. It even happens that cousins marry, or that an uncle marries his niece, in order to keep the clan traditions from being acquired by another village community. It seems, however, that, owing to the influence of the Coast tribes, the endogamic system has begun to give way to an exogamic system. Powerful and wealthy chiefs marry outside of their own village community, in order to secure an additional clan legend through marriage. This new system agrees with the one prevalent among the Kwakiutl tribe.

The kûsûm, or ritual house, is a religious convent in which all the deities of heaven are personified. The members of each clan are initiated according to their clan traditions; but the same societies of the same deities appear in the traditions of all the various clans. From what little I have been able to learn, it seems that there is an elaborate acting of the whole ceremonial, corresponding to the acting of the ceremonial among the Kwakiutl. I received the following description of the acting ceremony:—

The person who invites to the kûsûm, that is to say, the man whose son is to be initiated into one of the secret societies according to the tradition of his clan, requests a person who is called Ḳ'ayas to act the nine brothers and their sister, who reside in the House of Qûlûs, and whose charge the kûsûm is placed. The names of the brothers are Kyemsîlā'nâlis, Xi'nnâwa, Tsaqyemdā'lā'a, Q'ôyaxsmis, Ḳemdā'lā'a, Ḳ'ûmdā'lā'a, Ne'lâas, Q'âlaxā'wa, Xi'nnâ'a, and that of their sister, Ts'emq'ôyaxsem (see 33). In the rear of the house an elevated room is prepared for K'ayas, which he has down. He is covered with rings made of red cedar-bark. For four days he stays

[1] Jesup, Vol. II, p. 112.
[2] See Boas, The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians, in the Report of the U. S. National Museum for 1895, p. 311.